

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Fishbein and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am from Farmington and a supporter of CT Against Gun Violence. I am writing in support of HB-6355, an act to improve Connecticut's Extreme Risk Protection Order.

Although I have not personally experienced gun violence, I like many others live with the impact and constant threat of gun violence in our society, something that is truly unique to America. Prior to COVID-19 my wife and I travelled both domestically and internationally. It is a sad commentary that because of gun violence we can often feel safer in foreign countries than in our own.

Hopefully due to the vaccines it soon will be safe to once again travel. Unfortunately there is no vaccine against gun violence. But there are reasonable steps that can be taken to reduce gun violence and make us all safer. Surely we all feel somewhat safer when boarding planes, attending concerts or even entering buildings such as the state capitol due to the presence of screening devices. Is there some minor inconvenience? Undoubtedly. But I would argue, and I think most people would agree, that these inconveniences are greatly outweighed by the protection provided.

I think Connecticut's Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO), and the improvements under HB-6355, represent the kind of reasonable steps that can be taken to help reduce gun violence in our state, including gun deaths by suicide. Because there are often warning signs preceding violent or suicidal behavior, ERPOs can serve as a last resort means for temporarily removing guns when voluntary measures fail while also providing due-process protections.

I ask that you favorably report HB-6355 out of committee so that the General Assembly can vote to strengthen our Extreme Risk Protection law and help to continue Connecticut's leadership position across the nation in advancing common sense gun legislation.

Sincerely,

Dean J. Delach

Farmington, CT